Child Welfare Partners Committee (CWPC)
Meeting Notes
Thursday, September 12, 2019
By Telephone

Members in attendance: Liam Healy, Darin Thompson, Heather Davidson, Debbie Orduna, Teresa Burke, Susan Smalley, Chris Koepplin, Emily Blomme, Bill Kallestad, Matt Majeski, and Theresa Lewis

Members not in attendance: Jana Rhoads, Janee Harvey, Jean Slaybaugh,

<u>Summary of Meeting:</u>

Jana Rhoads and Janee Harvey were unable to attend this meeting. The group decided to discuss two time-sensitive topics on the agenda: Process for administrative rule changes and Fingerprinting rollout

Administrative Rule Changes Discussion

The CWPC providers weighed in on the newly Noticed shelter care rules. Heather explained the process of how rules are processed before being Noticed: A draft rule is sent to the Assistant Attorney General for review, the ACFS Bureau Chief and Division Administrator review the rule, then Fiscal Management reviews, etc. When the rule is Noticed the public can comment on it and the Department must respond to the comments. Heather noted that there have been Noticed rules that were amended because of public comment before the rule is Finalized.

Providers shared the potential value of having the CWPC be a sounding board for potential rule changes prior to the state having them posted for comments. Knowing how the rules directly impact providers including workforce challenges, cost, process/practices and any potential unintended consequences could be shared with Jana and Janee and other relevant DHS staff attending the CWPC meetings. The meeting today focused on a dialogue on if there was a review of additional costs for providers as it relates to the changes in administrative code and how the staffing requirement changes and fingerprinting challenges (see below) go hand-in-hand. There is a concern that if staffing and workforce continues to be a challenge, providers will not be able to meet ratio to house and support youth in their facilities. Some providers to PMIC services and have to choose to do one service over another as they cannot do both shelter and PMIC placements.

Fingerprinting Rollout Discussion

The fingerprinting process has been very cumbersome for providers to hire employees timely. The providers feel they are in a crisis with staff turnover and having to wait until employees are fingerprinted to have them on the floor interacting with children and makes the hiring process so long that employees are taking other jobs during the wait to get results. Per the information collected by the Coalition at the request of Jana and Janee, when a person is interviewed and then fingerprints are submitted to the Department of Public Safety (DPS) it can take on average anywhere between 15 to 28 days to be processed by them and the results mailed back and received by the provider 11 to 13 days making it at least a month long total process. This results in them paying their staff over time while in the process of hiring new staff that contributes to the burn out of their staff. This has a financial impact on them and they think the state should have a solution to provide for the timely resolution so services are no restricted. DPS is backlogged which contributes to the time lag in receiving fingerprint check results.

The CWPC providers would like a response from Jana regarding the two topic discussions today on the administrative rule and fingerprinting.

DHS Open Positions Update

Heather reported the positions of Adoption, Family Foster Care, and Foster Group Care positions being filled. Matt reported on the new DHS Director who will start November 1, 2019 and also that they are hiring new staff in the field.

The next meeting of the CWPC is scheduled as a conference call meeting on **October 10, 2019, from 1-2:00 p.m**.

Our Vision:
The combined experience and perspective of public and private agencies provide the best opportunity to reach our mutual goals: child safety, permanency, and well-being for Iowa's children and families. Collaboration and shared accountability will keep the focus on child welfare outcomes.